

**Downtown Business District**  
**Annual/Monthly Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, March 28, 2018**  
**The Inn at Middletown Meeting Room**  
**70 Main Street, Middletown, CT**

**Attendees**

Diane Gervais (Chair)	Larry McHugh (Chamber of Commerce)
Gary Nagler (Commissioner)	Cathy Duncan (Chamber of Commerce)
Marc Levin (Commissioner)	Sean Moriarity (Police Department)
Mike DiPiro (Commissioner)	Tom Marano (Planning Department)
Mary Ann Perrotti (Commissioner)	Kevin Elak (Health Department)
Jennifer Alexander (Commissioner)	Peter Harding (Harding Development)
Marie Kalita-Leary (Commissioner)	Trevor Davis (Commercial Real Estate)
Tom Ford (Commissioner)	Lisa Melaven (DBD Office)

**Annual Meeting**

**Year in Review - Diane Gervais**

Another busy year!

We continued to spread the word that Main St Middletown is a destination to explore and a great place to have a business. Our marketing campaign expanded with the creation of 4 additional commercials, bringing our total to 15 commercials, highlighting 59 businesses and our beautiful Main Street. We continued with channel 8, channel 3 with the addition of some Cable to air our commercials reaching the entire state. Once again featured our remarkable businesses during the holidays on the states number one lifestyle show, Better Ct. Overall the response from the business community, the development community and the consumer community has been very positive to our message that "Our Main Street" is a great place to come to eat, shop and enjoy. We distributed 20,000 seasonal downtown brochures highlighting our wonderful businesses and restaurants, getting them to Wesleyan parents and students, newcomers to town, brides inviting out of town guests, event planners holding large events and more. To welcome many of our new corporate offices we provided welcome bags filled with local treats and a coupon book to our new downtown employees this past fall, generating a feeling of goodwill and community spirit.

Our gift card program continued to grow this past year; we sold over \$51,000 worth of cards, We have over 95 businesses now participating...virtually every restaurant and retail and activity based business in the downtown is now participating, New businesses are immediately signed up and word is spreading that the gift cards make great corporate gifts; We have continued to have wonderful support from The City of Middletown, which buys many cards from us as incentives for their staff. We have had continued success selling the cards through both the Chamber and Amato's making it very convenient for customers to get the cards. Thank you to both whom volunteer their resources to this.

Our downtown was a filled with festive spirit once again from the beautiful snowflakes glittering all season, a season which we were able to extend this year thru the winter months. Our downtown continues to look beautiful each season with our seasonal plantings, done beautifully by Buds and Blossoms of Middletown. We had the sidewalks scrubbed in the Spring with the help of Hajjar management, and we are now cleaning the downtown kiosks and planters once a week. We have funded the Historical society's revamping of the Heritage markers in the Downtown, and will look forward to seeing the new markers this Spring. We have designed and are currently producing new wayfinding signage for our downtown, which will be located on every other light pole all along our Main Street., welcoming newcomers to our downtown.

Through great communication and cooperation with our city departments we have been able to stay on top of issues in our downtown, such as maintenance, parking, public safety and more. Thank you to all who help to make our downtown better each day. This past year has been one of incredible growth in our downtown, a direct result of years of dedication and hardwork on the part of the all of our current and past partners in the downtown who work every day to insure that we have a future.

Once again we did all of this with a board of volunteers, minimal staff and a small very focused budget. Many thanks to all of you and, to Lisa Melaven who keeps our office running smoothly!

### **Budget for 2018-2019 fiscal year:**

The budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year was approved by the current Board of Commissioners, setting the mill rate at 2.21 mills.

- Motion to accept – Jennifer Alexander
- 2<sup>nd</sup> by – Marie Kalita-Leary
- Budget accepted

### **Election of Board Officers:**

The elected Board Officers for the next twelve months is as follows:

- ❖ Chair – Marie Kalita-Leary (LEKA, LLC)
  - ❖ Vice Chair – Diane Gervais (Amato's Toy and Hobby)
  - ❖ Secretary - Marc Levin (Malloves Jewelers)
  - ❖ Treasurer – Mike DiPiro (Guilmartin, DiPiro, Sokolowski LLC)
- 
- Motion made by Jen Alexander
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mary Ann Perrotti
  - Board Members accepted
- 
- Motion to adjourn by Marc Levin
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> by Marie Kalita-Leary
  - Ajourn accepted

## **Monthly Meeting**

### **New Business:**

Larry McHugh, President of the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce clarified proper protocol must be followed when holding special meetings. There was a discussion of the bylaws regarding this.

### **Police Report – Sean Moriarty**

Sean reports the police department is gearing up for the Harvard Pilgrim Middletown Marathon which is set for Sunday, April 8<sup>th</sup> starting at 10:45am. There will be a 10 mile and 3.5 mile race. More information can be found on the Hartford Marathon website.

The police department continues to stay on top of the pan handling, soliciting and loitering downtown.

The arcade parking lot has been officially closed. The police department is now parking on Dingwall Drive.

## **Public Works – William Russo (not available)**

### **Parking Report - Geen Thazhampallath (not available)**

Jen Alexander reports the parking department is negotiating for small parking lots. Geen will address the closing of Riverview Arcade parking lot at the CBB meeting on Thursday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. There are many voiced concerns regarding downtown parking with the business owners.

### **Planning- Tom Marano**

Tom Marano reports the following:

- If you should see a business is struggling, lend a hand.
- The City has received the Working Cities Challenge Grant from the Boston Federal Reserve, which will be monitored by the United Way, with an April 1<sup>st</sup> start.
- Innovations Places; continue to hold meet-ups.
- There has been a lot of activity surrounding the location of where the new medical marijuana dispensary will be located. Any questions feel free to call Tom Marano.

### **Health Department – Kevin Elak**

Kevin reports the health department has been relatively quiet. The Taste of Middletown was well received by restaurant owners. There are potential new businesses going into the Camp's and Shlien's buildings.

Lastly, a coffee roaster company is going into the old Trolley Barn on the north end of Main Street. We believe that they will be roasting/ serving coffee and food also.

### **Chamber of Commerce – Cathy Duncan**

Cathy reports the Chamber of Commerce is getting ready for their 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Business after work Auction and Taste of Middletown – Sons of Italy, Tuesday March 27<sup>th</sup>.

- The Women's Leadership Conference with featured speaker Jean Chatzky, Financial Editor from NBC's Today Show, will be held on Tuesday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at the Radisson Hotel from 8:00a.m - 1:30p.m.
- The Middlesex Chamber of Commerce breakfast, featured speaker Mark Ojakean, President CT State Colleges & Universities will be held on Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at the Radisson Hotel from 7:00a.m. – 9:00a.m.

### **Minutes -**

- Motion made by Marc Levin
- 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom Ford
- Minutes accepted

### **Treasurer's Report – Mike DiPiro**

Mike reported we are on task. The second installment from the City of Middletown has been deposited into our money market account and will be reflected in next month's financials.

- Motion made by Mary Ann Perrotti
- 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom Ford
- Financials accepted

## **Chair Update – Diane Gervais**

Marketing: Marc and I are meeting with Tag Team Thursday to resume our TV commercial schedule.

Gift Cards: Continuing to sell very well and run smoothly!

Beautification: The planters have been emptied and will be planted shortly!  
We just need some warm weather!

The office was busy preparing the documents for the annual meeting,

Lisa has begun work on the updates to our brochure.

Thank you to all for your support the last few years.

I hope that I have served the downtown well. I did the best that I knew how.

I am hopeful that with our new plan of active board involvement and shared responsibility we will continue to make Main Street all that it can be and keep us from becoming another statistic.

Lastly, I would like to thank Lisa for all of her dedication and support.

## **Continuation of New Business:**

Jen Alexander is asking for an additional \$3,000.00 in continuing with the building of our Wayfinding signs. The money will be used for a writer/labor /photographer for the project.

- Motion made by Diane Gervais
- 2<sup>nd</sup> by Marc Levin
- Board Members accepted

There was a discussion of the previous board emergency meeting to discuss the DOT Rt. 9 plans. It was acknowledged that the DBD Board was remiss in not posting a notice with the Town Clerk's office regarding our emergency board meeting on the plan. As that meeting resulted in a statement put out that the board of the DBD was against the DOT Rt.9 plan. A motion was made to take another vote to ratify our statement, discussion ensued, ultimately the motion was seconded and carried to ratify as it stood.

- Motion made by Jen Alexander
- 2<sup>nd</sup> by Marie Kalita Leary
- Board Members accepted

There was also discussion that the DBD board and or members of the district should attend the upcoming council meeting to make their thoughts known to the Common Council on the DOT Rt. 9 plan and on the parking situation.

There was a discussion on the Chamber of Commerce generating a parking committee to work with the City on the parking situation.

- Motion to adjourn by Marc Levin
- 2<sup>nd</sup> by Marie Kalita Leary
- Adjourn accepted

